constituted to deliberate upon the issue of setting up the proposed National Council. The Task Force shall submit its report to the Ministry by 31st July, 2009.

Shortage of doctors

3123. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether country is short by six lakh doctors, 10 lakh nurses and 2 lakh dental surgeons;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for such shortages; and

(d) the steps initiated to recruit the staff according to the country's requirement especially in Andhra Pradesh by giving them sops in rural and backward areas?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (d) As per information furnished by Medical Council of India, the total number of registered allopathic doctors in the country is 7,33,617. Currently, there are 299 medical colleges in the country for teaching modern system of medicine with annual intake of 35, 152 who add up to the existing medical manpower. Further, there are 24,893 dental surgeons in India. The National Rural Health Mission has been operationalised with the aim of providing accessible and reliable primary health care facilities especially to poor and the vulnerable section of the population. Medical Council of India regulations are being amended to rationalise land requirement, student-teacher ratio, allowing public-private partnership which will facilitate setting up of more medical colleges and increase the number of doctors. This Ministry has proposed to, set up a National Council for Human Resources in Health as an overarching regulatory body for the health sector to reform the current regulatory framework and enhance supply of skilled personnel. A Task Force under the chairmanship of Union Secretary (Health and Family Welfare) has been constituted to deliberate upon the issue of setting up the proposed National Council. The Task Force shall submit its report to the Ministry by 31st July, 2009.

As per the Bajaj Committee recommendations of nursing staffing norms for Hospital and community/services, 10.43 lakhs nurses would be required by 2012. With the existing training capacity 6.84 lakhs nurses are expected to be trained by 2012.

Free medical services

3124. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the expenditure incurred by poor population to meet their medical needs amount to about 42 per cent of GDP;